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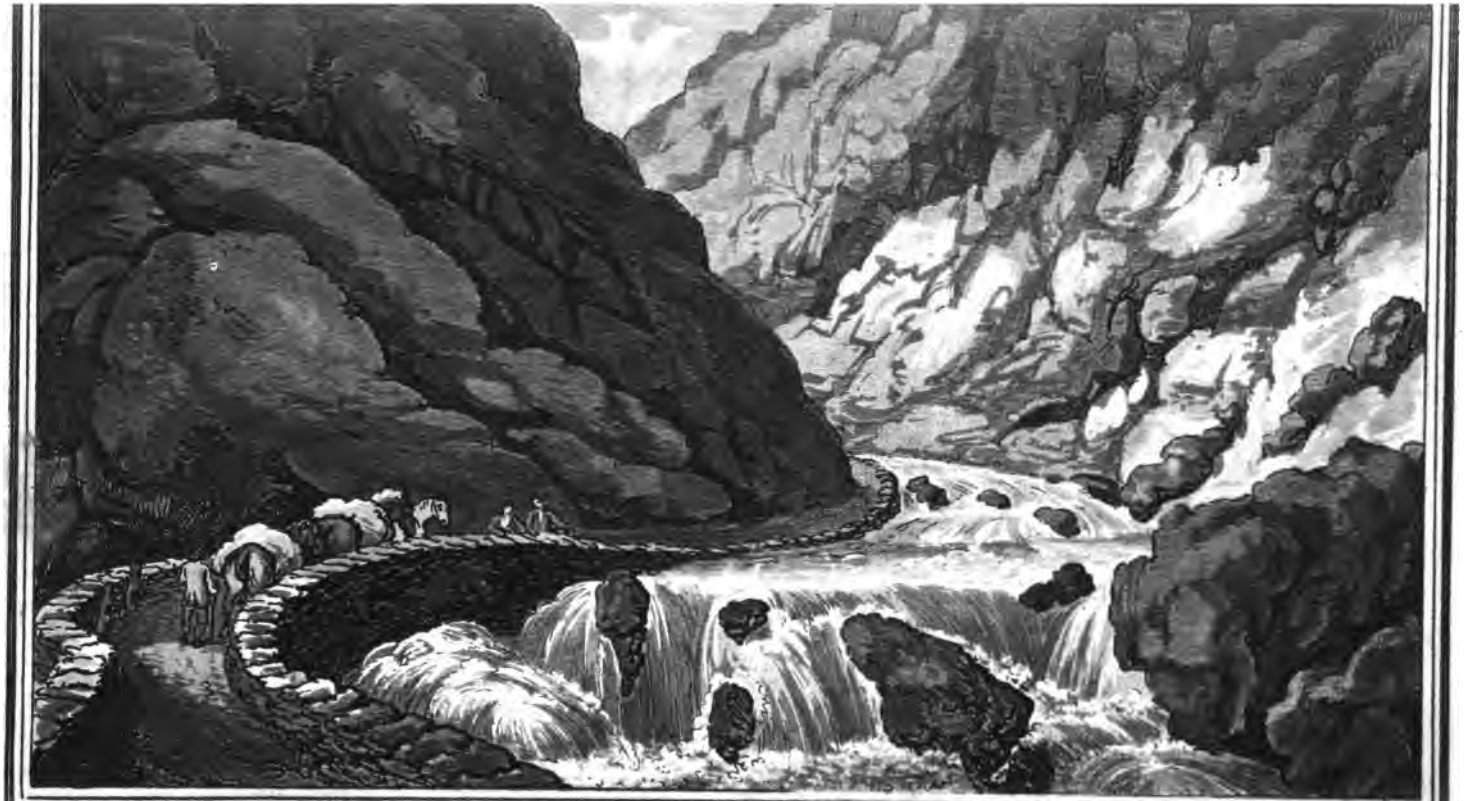

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Remarks

ON

A Tour

TO

North and South Wales

in the Year 1797.

BY HENRY WIGSTEAD.

With Plates

From Rowlandson, Pugh, Howitt &c.

(Aquatinted by I. Hill.)

London.

Published by W. Wigstead, N.o 40, Charing Cross.

1800.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE romantic and pictureſque ſcenery of North and South Wales, having within theſe few years been conſidered highly noticeable and attractive, I was induced to viſit this Principality with my friend Mr. Rowlandſon, whoſe abilities as an artiſt need no eulogium from me.

We

We left London in Auguſt 1797, highly expectant of gratification: nor were our fulleſt hopes in the leaſt fruſtrated.

At the time of our excurſion, I had no idea of ſubmitting to the public any of our minutes or ſketches; but as ſeveral of the ſubjects amongſt our ſcenery have become topics of admiration, as well to the artiſt as curſory traveller, I have in the following ſheets endeavoured to give a faint idea of their beauties; accompanied by ſome ſhort remarks on the road, merely

merely intended as a ſort of Vade Mecum to ſtimulate the readers to further and more important inquiries; and in order, if poſſible, that they may, by being apprized of many inconveniencies we experienced, be enabled to avoid them.

H. W.

ERRATA.

Page 45 *Line* 12 *for* colorem, *read* colori

— 67 — 18 *for* Henry VII. *read* Henry V.

REMARKS

IN A

TOUR,

THROUGH

NORTH and SOUTH WALES,

IN THE YEAR 1797.

THE firſt town on the road from *London* to *Shrewſbury*, (which is generally the entrance to *North-Wales*,) worthy of remark, is the ancient one of *St. Alban* in the county of *Herts*, 21 miles from *London*. This place derives its name from *Alban*, the firſt Engliſh Martyr, who ſuffered in the perſecution under *Diocleſian*. He was buried on a hill, in the neighbourhood of this town; where a monaſtery was erected, and dedicated to him, by King *Offa*.----Old *Verulam* ſtood on the other ſide the river, in the moor, S. W.

of the town. *Humphrey*, brother to *Henry* V. called the good Duke of *Glouceſter*, was buried in this abbey. His body was diſcovered by accident, ſome years ſince, in a ſort of pickle; and the coffin is ſhown to this day. The abbey at preſent appears very much in need of repair. Good poſt horſes may be had at ſeveral inns here; but the White Hart is apparently the largeſt and moſt frequented.

From hence the road trends through *Redbourne*, (four miles.) The *Watling-ſtreet* runs very near here. The church was rebuilt in the reign of *Henry* VI. by *John Wheathamſtead*, the then abbot of *St. Albans*.

Market-ſtreet is four miles further. On the right is a pleaſantly ſituated ſeat, formerly a nunnery of *Benedictines*.

Dunſtable is the next poſt-town. A long ſtreet, but not containing many well-built houſes. The ſoil here is chalk. This place

was

was once ravaged by the *Danes*; but it was rebuilt by *Henry* I. who made it a royal borough.

It, however, never ſent members to parliament. At this place, ſeveral of the *Lollards* were martyred, in the reigns of *Henry* V. and VII. The church is part of a priory, built by *Henry* I.---and oppoſite to it there ſtands a farm-houſe, called *Kinſbury*; ſaid to have been a royal palace. A great manufactory in ſtraw is carried on here, chiefly by women and children; who excel all the world in forming hats, boxes, ſhoes, &c. out of that commodity. The larks in this vicinity are ſaid to be remarkable for their ſize and flavour.

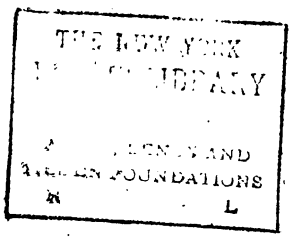
The Sugar Loaf is a good inn, and moſt frequented.

The Hills between here and *Stoney-Stratford*, (to which place we paſſed through *Brick Hill*, *Hockliffe*, and *Fenney-Stratford*,) are frequent and ſteep; and the

road very heavy. This ſtage is eighteen miles.

Stoney-Stratford, (Bucks,) is a populous town, and principally inhabited by lace-makers. At every door almoſt, the women and children are ſeen induſtriouſly employed in this manufacture. There are two good pariſh churches here, and the houſes are of ſtone and brick. King *Edward* I. erected a croſs here, in memory of his Queen, *Eleanor*. In May 1743, a dreadful fire happened in this town, which deſtroyed 150 houſes. Near Old *Stratford*, commences *Northamptonſhire*, commonly conſidered the center of the kingdom. From thence we proceeded to *Towceſter*, which contains nothing remarkable; and is a very dull town. In 917 it was ineffectually beſieged by the *Danes*.

Daventry is the next town noticeable. Here was formerly a monaſtery: many Roman coins have been diſcovered in the neigh-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1766

neighbourhood. It is certain that a Roman ſtation was in the vicinity, and many antiquarians believe it to have been the *Tripontium* of *Antoninus*. The *Watling-ſtreet* runs through it to *Dunſmore Heath*. *John of Gaunt* is ſaid to have had a palace in *Daventry* park. A very good road, with firs and elms on each ſide, leads on over *Dunſmore Heath* to *Coventry*. This Heath has been mentioned, as the place where *Guy of Warwick* ſlew the *Dun Cow*. It is now in encloſure.

Coventry is a large and very populous city. The ſtreets are narrow, ill paved, and decorated with many ancient houſes. In 1016 there was a rich convent here, which was in that year deſtroyed by the *Danes*. It was rebuilt by *Leofric*, Earl of *Mercia*, who was firſt lord of this city. As his lady was its beſt benefactreſs, there is a tradition, that her huſband having taxed the city heavily, (for ſome offence

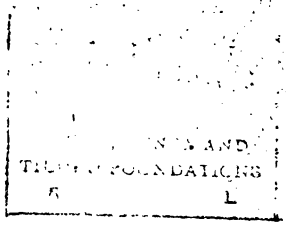
they had given him,) this lady, named *Godiva*, importuned him to remit the penalty. She, however, could not prevail on him, unleſs ſhe would conſent to ride naked through the ſtreets. To this ſhe did conſent; and after having ordered all the doors and windows to be ſhut, actually went on horſeback through the city with her looſe hair hanging down, which entirely covered her. The ſtory of *Peeping Tom* is well known: His effigy is now to be ſeen, next door to the King's-head inn; ſaid to be the very houſe, from whence he attempted to gratify his curioſity. There is a fair here on the Friday after *Trinity Sunday*; when the figure of a naked woman on horſeback is carried through the ſtreets. The cathedral has to boaſt of a moſt beautiful Gothic ſpire: the carved mouldings are much mutilated; which ſeems to have been in conſequence of the material not poſſeſſing ſuch power of reſiſtance

reſiſtance to the hand of time, as Portland Stone: It is a kind of brown Iron ſtone. There is no particular monument or veſtige of antiquity in the interior of this edifice. The quantity of ribbons manufactured in this city, is immenſe: The noiſe of the weavers' looms aſſails the paſſenger's ear in every direction: The King's Head is a good Inn.

Purſuing our route, we paſſed *Meriden*, (where there is a large inn, which appears to have been a manſion-houſe) in our way to *Birmingham* (Warwickſhire), which is approachable by a ſteep aſcent. This town, on firſt appearance, by no means prepoſſeſſes the traveller in its favour---a confuſed maſs of brick and tile rubbiſh piled together, enveloped in an almoſt impenetrable ſmoky atmoſphere, is by no means an agreeable object to a pictureſque eye---it lies nearly in the centre of the kingdom. Prince *Rupert* laid ſiege to it in 1643. In 1665,

it was viſited by the plague; the infection was circulated from a box of clothes brought by the carrier to the White Hart Inn. It is computed to contain eighty thouſand inhabitants, and thirteen thouſand houſes, and is, perhaps, the greateſt manufactory for hard ware in the univerſe. There is a very elegant theatre here, with coffee-room, and every convenience. Soho, the celebrated manufactory of Meſſrs. Boulton, is particularly recommendable to the attention of the Ladies. At about two miles beyond *Birmingham*, the country puts on a very different aſpect to that which has been previouſly paſſed through---innumerable forges, kilns, and ſteam engines, (from whence iſſue vaſt columns of ſmoke, rolling in dark maſſes) obſtruct the proſpect in every direction. By going a very little way out of the uſual direct road, we paſſed through *Dudley*, ten miles from *Birmingham*. The venerable remnant of the Caſtle at this

place


AND
FOUNDATIONS

BEVAN TOY SHOP
A BRITISH TOY SHOP

place is well worth the notice and particular attention of the traveller; the proſpect from here is very diſtant and beautiful. The road from this place to *Wolverhampton* (ſix miles) is but indifferent; it is kept in repair for the moſt part with clinkers and cinders from the adjacent forges.---*Wolverhampton* is a neat market town, from whence the road to *Shiffnell* is very pleaſant. The towering ſummit of the *Wrekin* is now and then ſeen peeping through the woody viſtas; and the grey tinted diſtant Welſh hills, ſcarcely to be diſcriminated from the horizon, aſſiſt as boundaries to this extenſive ſcene; and muſt be particularly impreſſive, as novelty in its higheſt degree, on thoſe who previouſly have only been accuſtomed to view and admire the ſtrong-marked outline of *Hampſtead* and *Highgate*.

From *Shiffnell* we turned out of our direct road to viſit *Colebrook Dale*. Whoever wiſhes to inveſtigate the different curioſities

of

of the manufactories at this place, muſt appropriate ſome days to that purpoſe; they moſt aſſuredly will find themſelves amply repaid. Our general purſuit, however, was nature, not art; and we here found ſo many beauties demanding our attention, that we knew not where to ſelect:---as an epicure, who viewing a ſervice of dainties, ſuffers the whole to be removed before his choice determines: ſo were we ſituated.---We literally wandered in ſearch of the *ne plus ultra*, till the evening's haſty approach had nearly prevented our making even a ſlight ſketch. The Tontine inn is a very accommodating manſion. The road from this place to *Hay-gate* (returning into the direct road) is ſteep, and on the edge of a tremendous precipice for about a mile; though it is not called a turnpike-road, it is not untolled. The face of the country is here in parts an entire blaze of red fire; the heat in paſſing theſe Ætnas in

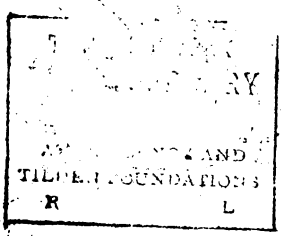
minia-

miniature is intenſe; indeed, ſcarcely bearable; and the thick black ſmoke emitted from the ſmelting-houſes almoſt ſuſpends reſpiration. The coals neceſſary in ſuch abundance for carrying on the different manufactories are conveyed in low carts, which are drawn up and down the ſurrounding precipices in groves laid in the ground, in which caſt iron wheels run. The roads are entirely ſurfaced with clinkers, cinders, and droſs from the iron ore. At *Hay-gate* (the foot of the *Wrekin*), we found nothing to tempt us to ſtop.

Shrewſbury is the next town; it is ſituated on an eminence, with two bridges over the Severn. The Caſtle was erected by *Roger de Montgomery*, the firſt Earl, to whom it was granted by *William the Conqueror*; he alſo founded an Abbey here. In the reign of *Henry* III. part of the town was burnt by the Welſh. The corpſe of *Harry Percy*, ſurnamed *Hotſpur*, was here buried; but by order

order of *Henry* IV. (againſt whom he had rebelled,) it was taken out of its grave, and put between two mill-ſtones: after which, it was beheaded and quartered.

In 1551, the ſweating ſickneſs made its firſt depredations here; and extended fatally through the kingdom. The ancient road, called *Watling-ſtreet*, comes hither from *London*, and goes on to the very extreme part of *Wales*. There is a new bridge lately built over the *Severn*, where formerly ſtood the celebrated Welſh Bridge; two mutilated arches of which, are now only to be ſeen. There are ſeveral good built churches here; and the walk, called the *Quarry*, (a grove of lime trees) is frequented by all the Shrewſbury belles, particularly on Sundays. Croſſing the bridge juſt mentioned, we entered *North Wales*, bound to *Welſh Pool*, by the worſt road we had yet ſeen. Innumerable ſandy hills almoſt prevented our horſes from moving. At ten miles,


AND
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A WELSH LANDLADY.

miles, there is a ſort of hedge ale-houſe, where we were neceſſitated to reſt. We found the landlady, with a numerous family, preparing dinner; it conſiſted of beans, and ſmall ſquare lumps of bacon, fried and mixed together. The children were placed round a board, with each a wooden ſpoon: and with which they ſet to work, on the introduction of their provender, with no ſmall degree of avidity.---We were here cheered with the *comfortable* tidings, of having eight miles of much worſe road to traverſe, 'ere we reached *Welſh Pool.*

On our arrival at this place, we found, that the aſſizes were then held here, and, as ſuch, had only juſt time to remark it as a populous irregular town, with a decent inn; it being too full to afford us an aſylum. Powis Caſtle is ſeen from here.---*Llannamulloch*, 10 miles diſtant, was the place deſtined to receive us for the night. This is an inſignificant little village, (part of which is in *Shropſhire*,

Shropſhire, and part in *Denbighſhire*,) approachable by a ſmall bridge. In time of floods, however, travellers are under the neceſſity of fording ſeveral ſtreams, whoſe depths are, at different times, very uncertain. The uneven ſurface of the ground, under the water, renders it extremely diſagreeable, if not dangerous, to perſons unacquainted with the paſſage. Very little accommodation is here to be met with. Indeed the traveller muſt now begin to take leave of the luxuries on the other ſide the *Severn*. Welſh cuſtoms and manners begin here to bud; and the ear is made very familiar to the guttural tones of the natives of *Cambria*. The paſſing peaſantry are very reſpectful; and we began to think we ſhould wear out our hats in returning their attentions, The beds here are not *quite* ſo comfortable as at our *London* Hotels. I was accommodated with the ſtate room, which was a cockloft, at the very brink of a ſtep-

a ſtep-ladder ſtaircaſe. The tiling of the roof came very near in contact with my head, while recumbant; and the bed-clothes had certainly been intended to cover the celebrated Poliſh dwarf.

Oſweſtry is the next noticeable place, remarkable for having (though rather a large town,) the feweſt public houſes we ever witneſſed; we began to deſpair of finding any ſort of quarters, to afford that refreſhment, which a hot day and a hilly country had rendered abſolutely neceſſary. At a queer kind of inn, however, ſurrounded by a phalanx of waiters, (ſuch as they were,) we obtained what we required, and took our departure for the fertile and happy vale of *Llangollen*, eight miles from hence: Mountain tops on each ſide terminated our proſpect: theſe, however, were ſometimes hid from our ſight, by revolving clouds. Beautiful bits of nature, ſimple and unadorned, met our eye in every direction.

The

The wild ſpontaneous playfulneſs of the goddeſs, was happily blended with the induſtrious efforts of the huſbandman; and our ſenſes were, in the higheſt degree, gratified.

Chirk is beautifully ſituated, and affords much matter of remark for the pencil.

Llangollen, ſituated in the moſt beautiful vale throughout the principality, is a ſmall town, with only one tolerable inn: and of the accommodations at that---"*Cætera deſunt*,"---which, by ſome little freedom, may be conſtrued, "the leſs is ſaid, the better."

The bridge over the river *Dee* here, is mentioned as one of the curioſities of *Wales*. It is built of ſtone, on the ſolid rock. The bed of the river runs rapidly through its arches, in various meandering caſcades, here and there interrupted by large maſſes of granite: through the center arch it falls magnificently, in one conſiderable

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LANGOLLEN.

ſiderable torrent, ſaid to be of the depth of forty feet. Moſt excellent ſalmon is here to be obtained, the product of the river.

This valley is entirely ſurrounded with mountains of immenſe height, at the pinnacle of one of which is caſtle *Dinas Brane.*

The approach to this fragment of antiquity is very tedious and difficult; and my companion experienced many ſevere falls in attempting to employ his pencil, to detail its appearance; which is too much decayed to be of conſequence, either as an object of information, or pictureſque beauty. The natives here ſcarcely underſtand a word of the Engliſh language: the children have, however, been inſtructed to beg; and "give me a penny" is to be heard from twenty little furrounding tongues at the ſame time.

The remains of the abbey, *Valle Crucis*, about two miles from hence, amply repay the traveller, for any trouble or fatigue he may take in viſiting them. Theſe, indeed, tend to prove, that the holy fathers of the days, in which this abbey flouriſhed, were not a little remarkable for their taſteful choice of ſituation. We ſet it down as a little Eden.

This religious houſe was diſſolved in 1235, and is ſaid to be the firſt of the Weſh that underwent that fate. There ſtill remain the ruins of the church and part of the abbey, which is inhabited by a huſbandman. About a quarter of a mile higher on the road, are the remains of a round column, called *the pillar of Eliſeg*, ſaid to be the moſt ancient Britiſh pillar extant. In the civil wars of the laſt century, it was thrown down and broken; and as ſuch appears thus mutilated. The banks of the *Dee* here furniſh matter of con-

contemplation and admiration for the moſt enthuſiaſtic devotee to the graphic art. At every turn, the eye is delighted by new beauties of nature:---with romantic lovelineſs ſhe breaks upon the aſtoniſhed traveller; and the mind is abſolutely bewildered in endeavouring to give a preference to any ſingle charm.

We left this delightful ſpot with regret; and mutually agreed, that we could have here found ample ſcope for ſtudy, at leaſt for a month. *Ruthyn* is a large market town; to which we paſſed through the vale of *Clwyd*, with the extent and fertility of which we were highly gratified: This appears a much more cultivated country, than the *Arcadian* vale, which we recently mentioned: and by ſome travellers, indeed, it is made to vie with it; but it falls very ſhort, in point of pictureſque beauty. The road to this place is very mountainous; and we conſidered twelve miles here

tired, after his defeat at *Caer-Caradoe*. The peaſantry have removed moſt of the ſtones to make encloſures; and prompted by the ſame motive, have rudely deſtroyed a large ſtone cheſt, which till very lately was celebrated as a Druidical memento.

Kennioga has only a ſingle houſe (an inn) It is a poſt ſtage, 13 miles from *Corwen*. We did not find cleanlineſs its moſt conſpicuous recommendation. From hence to *Llanwryſt*, a moſt ſublime extent of ſcenery unvails itſelf,---the moſt luxuriant vale, embracing every where the baſis of cloud-capped mountains, conſtitutes the general feature. We, in contemplating this beautiful burſt, conſidered it as comparable to any of the moſt admired ſituations in *Switzerland*, or in the environs of *Tivoli*. *Llanwryſt* is a market town. Here on our arrival, we were attended by a Welſh minſtrel, who during our ſupper, amuſed us on his harp with ſeveral provincial airs,

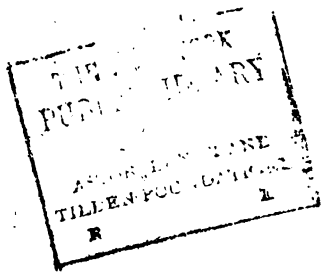
per-

perfectly novel and characteriſtic, in a very neat ſtyle. There is a very good inn here, and the market is numerouſly attended. *Inigo Jones* is ſaid to have been born in this town. The bridge is mentioned as an early effort of his architectural genius: and, from a particular geometrical property, it trembles with the preſſure of a ſingle perſon, againſt or on the center arch. It is made of ſtone, and has three arches, through which the river runs rapidly. The ancient ſeat of the *Gwdr* family is in the vicinity.

From *Llanwryſt* to *Conway*, the road is romantic in the extreme. At almoſt every two or three hundred yards a foaming torrent is ſeen daſhing from incredible height on one hand, and an extenſive and fertile vale on the other; with the gently gliding river *Conway* meandring through its encloſed paſtures. *Conway* has many enticing properties to the traveller. Food

for the pencil is to be found in abundance. On approaching it, the towering, venerable and extenſive remains of the Caſtle appear majeſtically above the town, which is ſurrounded with the ancient wall, very entire in many places. It is by no means a large town, but clean, with two very good inns. The river is here a mile broad. The caſtle was built by Edward I. in 1284. Its form is oblong, and placed on the verge of the ſolid rock. Whole turrets on one ſide have given way, and their tremendous fragments in gigantic maſſes have rolled from their rocky baſe to the ſtrand, where they now lay. The paſſing traveller can but admire and tremble, leſt, by a ſimilar (and perhaps equally inſtantaneous) craſh, he may be overwhelmed by another partial diſſolution of this venerable remnant of antiquity. Within this caſtle is a great Hall, 130 feet long, by 32 feet broad. The roof is very lofty, and ſupported by hand-

THE KINGS APARTMENTS CONWAY CASTLE.



handſome arches: Here the King held his levee. The King's apartments are leaſt mutilated: the mouldings are many of them very entire: innumerable fire places are obſervable. I gueſſed the largeſt in the opening to be about 20 feet wide, by 12 feet high: this in all probability might have been the kitchen. There is a very old and extenſive building here, called the college: there are ſeveral coats of arms ſculptured on the ſtones in the front. Edward the Firſt is ſaid to have eſtabliſhed here a ſeminary for youth. Through an arched gate-way, at the bottom of the town, *Bodſcallar* and *Dyganwy* caſtles are to be ſeen: a ſmall part only of the latter remains: It was the reſidence of the princes of North Wales. It is ſaid to have been deſtroyed by *lightning* in 816. So much has been ſaid of this caſtle, that I cannot omit mentioning that *Camden* believes it to have been the ancient *Dictum* under the latter Em-

Emperors. It is ſaid to have been rebuilt, and conſidered as a ſtrong poſt in 876. It was reſtored again to conſequence in 1098, by the Earl of *Cheſter*: again it was deſtroyed by *Llewelyn-ap-Jorwith*, and rebuilt by an Earl of *Cheſter* in 1209. King *John* retreated highly cenſured with his army from hence, in 1211.

From *Conway* to *Caernarvon* is twenty-four miles. The road is at firſt unintereſting; but, at about four miles, the ſcenery becomes really terrific. *Penman Roſs*, on the right hand, awfully raiſes its aſpiring head, and intercepts the beams of the ſun in his higheſt elevation; while *Penmanmaur*, on the left, ſeems, from its deſolated and rocky ſummit, to threaten the traveller with inſtant annihilation. The road runs round near the baſe of the mountain one hundred yards above the ſea: the whole height of this barren and terrific elevation is 1545 feet. This road has been made

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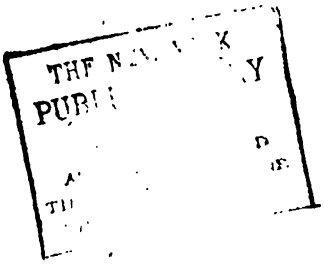
PENMANMAWR.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made at an immenſe expenſe, to which the citizens of *Dublin* have largely contributed, it being the road of the mail coach to the ferry for *Holy-head.* It is flanked by a ſtone wall on the ſide towards the ſea. This is about three feet high, over which the water and the diſtant iſle of *Angleſea* are ſeen. On the other ſide, the ſurface of the mountain, which is very ſteep, is covered with tremendous maſſes of ſtone, which ſeem ready to ſlide from their ſlippery baſe, and overwhelm the paſſenger in inevitable deſtruction.------ From the almoſt inceſſant rain we had experienced for ſome time before, and the rapidity of the land-ſprings, which poured down on every ſide from the very ſummit, we were very much alarmed in our paſſage, leſt one of theſe maſſes ſhould arreſt us; particularly as the wall had been driven in ſeveral parts down the precipice into the ſea by ſimilar accident; and indeed

deed one huge fragment lay in the middle of the road, to all appearance very recently removed from above, and which I am certain, if broken up, could not have been cleared away by ten large waggons. Formerly the road was over the ſands, which was extremely dangerous, and many lives were ſacrificed. We ſaw a great number of wild goats of a white colour on the ſides of theſe two mountains, moſtly near the ſummits. Their haunts are every way unapproachable, and I do not think a muſket ball from the road would do execution amongſt them.

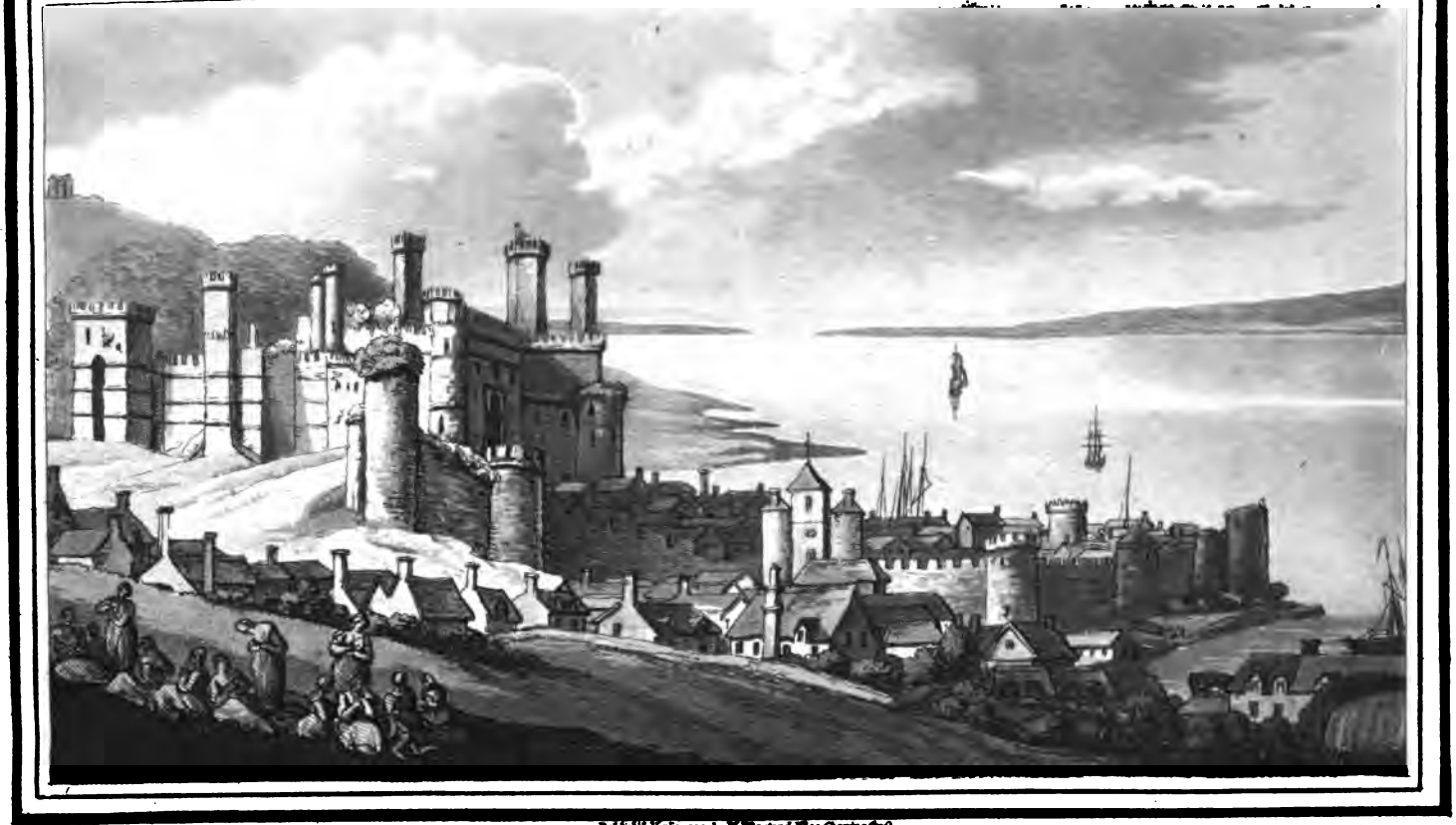
Bangor is ſituated very flatly: There is nothing remarkable in the architecture of the cathedral: the ſtreets are mean, and the population not very great. The paſſage from the ferry here to *Angleſea* is about a mile over: this city was once ſo large as to be called *Bangor* the great, and was defended by a powerful caſtle, built

by

by *Hugh* Earl of *Cheſter*: It has long been demoliſhed. The preſent church is ſuppoſed to have been built in the reign of *Henry* VII. The inn near it is a very good one. The road from here to *Caernarvon* is as good as the Weſtern road at *Hyde-Park corner*, with mile ſtones and direction poſts. On one ſide, we ſaw the ſea and the town of *Beaumaris*, with Lord *Buckley* and Lord *Penrhyn's* ſeats; and on the other, a rich and extenſive vale, interſected with numberleſs little rivulets and murmuring caſcades in miniature, at the extremity of which riſe the majeſtic hills of *Snowdon*. We ſaw theſe prominent features of nature at a particularly lucky period. Their tops on the Weſtern ſide were tinged with the ſaffron reflection of the declining ſun; and to the Eaſtward, on the other, the moon appeared in her fulleſt diameter, caſting in parts her cool grey luſtre in contraſt on their baſe, and appearing

ing wholly prevalent in the vale. The rainy clouds were ſlowly diſperſing, and clearing round their caps with the appearance of huge bolſters.

Caernarvon town was built by command of *Edward* I. out of the ruins of the ancient city of *Segontium*. The Princes of *Wales* formerly kept their chancery and exchequer courts here. On the Weſt ſide of it ſtands the caſtle, which was intended to curb the Welſh mountaineers, and ſecure the paſſage to *Angleſea*. In a part of it is ſhewn a room, in which *Edward* II. is ſaid to have been born. About ten years after his birth, it was beſieged by the Welſh; but ſoon after repaired. This town covers twice as much ground as *Bangor*: and the gentle breeze from the ſea is highly acceptable, after wandering for ſultry hours in its mountainous vicinity. The ſtreets are clean here, and the place has a neat appearance: At the hotel,



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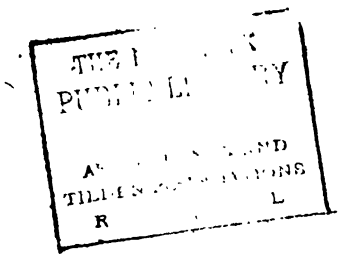
CAERNARVON.



hotel, good accommodation is afforded; but here, as well as at all the inns already viſited, I was not able to diſcern any *penchant* for cleanlineſs. It is difficult, all through *North-Wales*, to find any novelty or ſcarce any change in proviſion:--- Mutton, chickens and ducks, are the materials, on which the traveller muſt ring the changes, as ſkilfully as he can. Vegetables are ſcarce, and what are to be had, very bad: The ale is ſtrong, and greatly provocative to ſomniferous oriſons.

Llanberris Lake, at the baſe of *Snowdon*, ten miles from hence, is worthy of notice. The road is particularly remarkable, for being ſtrewed with huge maſſes of ſtone, which appear to be the interior wreck of ſome vaſt mountain.---- At the near verge of this water, we procured by ſigns (for Engliſh is not underſtood here) a flat-bottomed ſort of dung barge, in which a couple of ſtout legitimate

legitimate ſons of *Cambria* undertook to paddle us down to *Snowdon*'s foot. The pinnacle of this ſublime mountain, called in the vicinity *the cap*, was fortunately free from the generally collected clouds, and we had an uninterrupted proſpect of all the beauties of the ſcenery. A very ſhattered remnant of a caſtle, called *Dolbaddern*, is now ſtanding; and, in the diſtance, appears as a ſmall knoll or lump, ſcarcely to be diſcriminated in the vaſt expanſe. The people here are really almoſt in a ſtate of ſimple nature. The value of money is ſcarcely known: they pay the rent of their premiſes in cattle generally, which they breed on their land. Fleſh is ſcarce ever taſted by them; and, except when viſitors leave behind remnants of wine, ale, &c. milk is the principal beverage that paſſes their lips. They are remarkably obſervant of any decorations worn by ladies, ſuch as beads, laces, and feathers, which

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SNOWDON from LLANBERRIS LAKE.

which ſtrengthened my opinion of their ſimilitude with the *Otaheiteans*, &c. Theſe they admire, and handle with a ſort of rudeneſs bordering on ſavage manners, likely to raiſe alarm in the breaſt of the fair wearer.

Snowdon itſelf is a principal object in the traveller's purſuit; at the hotel at *Caernarvon*, information how to attain its ſummit is to be obtained. The miſts and fogs are here ſo prevalent, that it is a ſort of lottery, however with 100 blanks to a prize, whether the very great fatigue attendant on climbing its brow affords the ſmalleſt gratification *in ultimatum*. When the proſpect is unobſtructed, it is the moſt wonderful map imagination can form: the elements in the diſtance ſeem mingling with each other; and earth, air, and water, unite in one general maſs.

Quithlin lake on the road from *Caernarvon* to *Snowdon* is a large ſheet of water, about a mile in length, but not particu-

larly remarkable for any pictureſque beauty. Near here the aſcent to *Snowdon* begins.

Bethgellart is ſituated in the heart of mountains. On the road, *Nantz-Mill* is a beautiful little prominent object, with a very muſical water-fall, furniſhing ample ſubject for the pen of a paſtoral poet. At the caravanſera at *Bethgellart* we found what we had been ſtrangers to for many a day, good port wine. Our hoſt, however, conſidered it as a hog does a pearl. Sir John Barley-corn is lord paramount of a very extenſive manor here, and his vaſſals are bowing and *nodding* to him in every hovel, with as much devotion as Brahmins to an Indian idol.

The road from hence to *Pont Aberglaſslyn* lies between two very high mountains. Goats without number are ſeen prowling in theſe inacceſſible heights. The bridge conſiſts of one arch, boldly pitched from rock to rock. The ſalmon

leap

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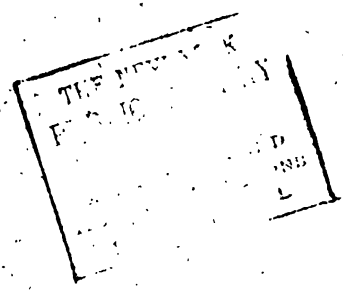
NANTZ MILL.



leap here is much talked of, and deſerves notice: the fall is about ſix feet, and the fiſh are ſeen ſpringing upwards very frequently; we ſaw ſeveral large ones, ſome of which failed in their attempt, and were forced away with the rapidity of the ſtream. Several copper mines are to be ſeen, but moſt of them appear neglected and filled with water. It is impoſſible to imagine a more ſecluded ſituation than this: rude unfiniſhed maſſes of compound matter, as if juſt ſtruck off from the great anvil of nature, are every where ſcattered; and convey an idea of chaotic fragments, ſtored away for the formation of another world.

Miſts and rains are here conſtant:—ſometimes in a moment, when viewing nature in all her brilliancy, the admiring traveller is enveloped in clouds. This was our caſe; and with great difficulty and ſome danger, we found our

way 12 miles back to our *Caernarvon* quarters. Returning to *Caernarvon*, I ſhall juſt obſerve that this town has a very great trade for ſlates; the paſſage from hence to Angleſea, at low water, is choaked with ſand, and of courſe very ſhallow; there is a boat or two here to be hired, but *Bangor* ferry is the general paſſage. The face of the iſland from hence is flat, and totally unintereſting. Some very good fiſh, called codlings, are here caught in great numbers; and proviſions are very plentiful and reaſonable. Many capital *general* ſhopkeepers inhabit this town, but the commonalty are poor in the extreme:---as at *Corwen*, men, women, and children,---cows ſheep, and pigs---pig promiſcuouſly together. The hogs are of a remarkably large breed, and the increaſe of them is much attended to;---to kill a ſucking pig would be deemed almoſt a ſacrilege.

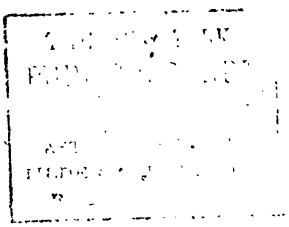
In

In the high ſtreet, are two excellent ſprings, at which the Welſh girls are every hour attendant;---and without ſhoe or ſtocking, trip over hedge and ſtyle, with their pitchers on their heads, blitheſome and content with their humble beverage.

Tan-y-Bwlch, the next place for accommodation, is twenty-one miles from *Caernarvon*; the road is ſo very bad, that four horſes muſt be engaged: it is indeed almoſt impaſſable; though at firſt we thought our hoſt was putting tricks upon travellers, yet we found it quite the contrary. In the way, we paſſed what is called a quaking bog; which travellers are neceſſitated to do with as much ſpeed as poſſible. The proſpect in parts is dreary in the extreme; a mountainous and rocky deſart country extends as far as the eye can reach, with ſcarce any beaten track; the ſurface entirely covered in places with rude rock. Our

weather was moſt uncomfortable: the wind howling like hyænas through the chaſms in the cliffs, and a thick darkneſs periodically enveloping us, made us not in love with dame Nature in her preſent garb---her decorations were more ſuitable to a *Hecate*.....We witneſſed here a remarkable phenomenon: looking into a vale beneath us, the dark clouds were revolving and veiling the country in perfect night; whilſt on the other hand, the mountains' brows and ſides were gilded with the ſun's beams; and a large illumined extent of country peeping between them, terminated by the ſea, gave a maſterly finiſh to a landſcape, novel and ſublime in the extreme.

The little inn at *Tan-y-Bwlch* appears from a very high ſummit of a mountain over a lovely woody vale, as a ſmall white ſpeck. The inconveniences of the vile road we had hitherto paſt, had fatigued us beyond



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FESTINIOG.

yond meaſure, and we began to reckon upon the comforts of good beds and a good ſupper; we had indeed a diſpute, whether we ſhould order chickens or chops: but our mortification on drawing up to the door can hardly be conceived, when mine hoſt with a petrifying phiz approached us, to ſay he had no room to receive us. Indeed there are, as I underſtand, but two beds to be occupied here with any degree of convenience. We had no other remedy than, if poſſible, to reach *Feſtiniog*, three long Welſh miles, at nearly dark, and with horſes entirely knocked up. Theſe three miles of as ſteep road as any we had yet paſſed, we had to walk (for our horſes could ſcarcely move the carriage) in the dark. We reached the inn (as it is called) at *Feſtiniog*, which we had nearly paſſed, miſtaking it for a barn or out houſe. I addreſſed myſelf to an ancient female, who had every appearance of a Welſh

weird ſiſter, and demanded if we could have beds? After telling us, that ſhe ſuppoſed we only came there, becauſe there was no accommodation at *Tan-y-Bwlch*,--- with ſeeming reluctance ſhe agreed we ſhould pitch our tents for the night here. There is no kind of aſylum within 17 miles of this place; therefore we were not a little ſatisfied at being under any kind of roof, as the rain had been inceſſant for many hours. Bad therefore, as the beſt room was, we ſecured it, ordered a peat fire to be lighted, and inquired what proviſion was to be had. The old lady waited on us, to what ſhe called the larder, in the approach to which we were nearly neceſſitated to creep on all fours. The appearance of its contents could certainly not vie with the Buſh at *Briſtol*. In a ſmall deal packing caſe lay a ſmall leg of ſtarved mutton, and a duck ready dreſſed; each of which, from their cadaver-

ous

ous hue, and their effect on our olfactory nerves, had not been near the fire for a fortnight. Hunger, however, we had to truſt to for ſauce, and the whole contents of this receptacle of luxuries was ſoon placed on our table. We found ſome good ale, to which we attended ſo cloſely, that our hoſteſs began to tremble, leſt we ſhould empty the cellar, as we had already done the larder. The inhabitants drink this liquor very ſparingly: a ſtone jug containing a pint is the general allowance at a village goſſiping: When the great perſonages (to wit, the curate, the blackſmith, the barber, and exciſeman) aſſemble to ſettle the affairs of the nation, they drink it alternately out of a ſmall cup, generally about twice the ſize of a walnut ſhell. It is whimſical in the extreme to be under the neceſſity of deſcribing, what is wanted in pantomime: many curious and laughable miſtakes occurred to us, in conſequence

quence of the domeſtics and peaſantry being totally unacquainted with the Engliſh language, and more particularly at this place. Our bed rooms were moſt miſerable indeed, the rain poured in at every tile in the cieling. The ſtate room was decorated with two treſſels, on which was nailed a common garden mat, on which lay a ſort of feather bed. The ſheets were literally wringing wet, with much difficulty we had them aired, but we thought it moſt prudent to ſacrifice to *Somnus* in our own garments between blankets. To conclude my remarks on this place---The whole external appearance, the bed room, the ſtaircaſe, and every part of the manſion, reminded us ſtrongly of an incident in *Count Fathom*: and we were both not a little pleaſed at turning our backs on it in the morning.

From here to *Dolghelly* is 18 miles, over mountains, and on the ſide of precipices; in

in the valley, a romantic rivulet murmurs over its rocky baſe: and when within a few miles of this town, the towering ſummit of *Cader Iris* terminates the proſpect. At the turnpike gate dwells the guide to this mountain, and alſo to the waterfalls in the vicinity, which every traveller muſt ſee, unleſs he means to out-do a certain *inquiſitive* noble perſonage, who viſited *Florence* to cull the beauties of art, and omitted paying devoirs to the *Medicean Venus*. This man has been a remarkable character, is very communicative and well informed: He has been guide on the ſame occaſion to *Wilſon*, *Gainſborough*, and every artiſt, who, for 30 or 40 years back, have viſited theſe places.

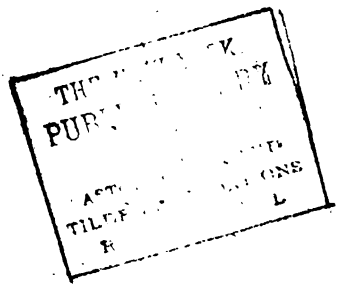
There is a very comfortable inn here, and excellent ſalmon and trout to be obtained: The mutton is alſo very good. *Dolghelly* is ſituated at the foot of *Cader-Iris*, an aſpiring mountain, nearly as high

as

which lay ſcattered in every direction. After aſcending and deſcending with every poſſible impediment in our road for about two miles, our ears were made ſenſible of the vicinity of the firſt cataract. It was neceſſary for us indeed in ſome places to ſlide down the ſlippery ſide of a mountain, to obtain a view of this moſt beautiful effort of nature---and paſs over a rotten plank (juſt wide enough for a ſingle perſon) thrown over the channel which receives the cataract.

It is impoſſible for pen or pencil to convey any idea of the beauties of this ſcene. A vaſt torrent, from an height of ſeveral hundred feet, rolling foaming down the rock; hid here and there by romantically projecting leafage; and its fall, at about every twenty yards, broken by a jutting granite promontory, projecting its liquid maſs into innumerable channels, with deafening roar impelled to the

WATER FALL near DOLGHELLY.



the baſe---is a ſubject truly ſublime and magnificent. The river, at its arrival in its rocky channel, runs tempeſtuouſly under the decayed paſs already deſcribed, which is ſuſpended from it at about 100 feet.

At a very ſmall diſtance from hence, through a boggy wood, is the other water-fall; which deſcends in one perpendicular broad ſheet of water from the ſame height as the laſt: this may be more magnificent, but is by no means equal in pictureſque beauty. Salmon and trout are here in abundance. The road in return is different, but not leſs unpleaſant. It is highly adviſeable to take ſome refreſhment from *Dolghelly*, on this expedition: nothing can be procured on the road; and nature, with all aſſiſtant comforts, eſpecially if the weather is hot, nearly ſinks under fatigue before you can reach your vehicles.

On

On our return to *Dolghelly*, we found the town in an actual ſtate of riot and confuſion; we could not approach our inn, for the croud of ſurrounding peaſantry. On inquiring into the occaſion of this tumult, we were informed that a Gentleman had juſt arrived, with---*a black ſervant!* This phenomenon had ſet the Welſh in an uproar, it being the firſt time ſuch a tinted being had made its appearance here: the poor fellow was perſecuted by them wherever he went, and both his maſter and him were actually forced to continue their route ſooner than they intended, in conſequence.

The road from hence runs at the foot of *Cader Iris*, where there is a pool of water; near to which, three tremendous maſſes of rock, ſeemingly broken and fallen from the ſummit of a mountain, are ſeen. The vulgar Welſh ſay that this mountain was the chair of a giant, who, going

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ABERISTWITH.

going to waſh his feet in the pool, kicked off his ſhoes, in which theſe three ſtones were. The road here is very rugged; and it is politic to be particularly attentive, at ſetting out, to the ſtate of the axle tree, wheels, &c: a few cords may, perhaps, be found convenient amongſt the baggage. At *Macchynllth* there is a good inn, with an excellent larder and beds; this is a large town. From *Dolghelly* to this place, many ſcenes in the ſtyle of *Pouſſin* ought to be admired. This place lies in a valley, ſurrounded by mountains; and has a town hall. It ſtands in the extreme weſt angle of *Montgomeryſhire*, and is ſeparated from *Merionethſhire* by a bridge and ſmall rivulet. From hence to *Aberiſtwith* is twenty miles, over an uphill and rocky road. The market at *Aberiſtwith* is numerouſly attended, by nymphs and ſwains from an extenſive vicinity, and is a very intereſting ſcene; happineſs beams in every countenance, and

rural felicity may, perhaps, raiſe ſome portion of envy in the paſſing emigrant children of faſhion and diſſipation. About September players attend here; and the town hall is then the theatre.

In the winter months there are frequent aſſemblies. This town is a faſhionable watering place, to which moſt families in the vicinity reſort in the ſeaſon: it is called the *Brighton* of *Wales*: and ſituated in the bay of *Cardigan*, open to *St. George's Channel*. At the end of the town ſtands the decayed remnant of a large caſtle, once the reſidence of the great *Cadwallader*. It appears to have been a place of great ſtrength. It was from the lead mines in this neigbourhood, that the celebrated *Sir Hugh Middleton*, projector of the New River, acquired the large fortune, which he afterwards devoted to that undertaking. He died nearly inſolvent: but the riches of the preſent company

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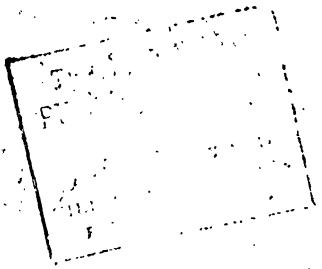
CARDIGAN.

pany clearly evince the utility of the plan to the metropolis. The ſtage from here is to *Cardigan* 40 miles, and very hilly; at 18 miles is a neat inn, *(Aberion,)* where it is abſolutely neceſſary to reſt; for in the other 22 miles, nothing like refreſhment can be had. *Sir John Barley Corn* is here the ſaint moſt invoked. The inn at *Cardigan* is like moſt of the Welſh ones, not too cleanly in kitchen or bed-room. The town is, by no means, intereſting or picturesquely ſituated: it is two miles from the ſea; the remains of the caſtle are covered with ivy, and may be paſſed unnoticed. There is a handſome ſtone bridge over the Tovy, which rolls rapidly through its arches. The firing uſed here is called culm; it is made from the duſt of coal, rolled up in round balls, mixed with clay, and gives great heat without ſmoke. The ſtage from hence to *Carmarthen* is 30 miles. We were informed that part of it was in

rainy weather, like the preſent, impaſſable; that the wheels of carriages would not touch bottom in the bogs, &c. We conceived this to be policy in our hoſt in order to detain us, and paid little attention; we muſt, however, have done otherwiſe, had we not been provided with our own horſes. The country from hence is cultivated to the very top of the hills, and begins to ſhew the great difference between North and South *Wales*; barren rugged mountains, cataracts, and rocks, gradually become ſcarce objects, and the landſcape evinces the more civilized ſtate of the inhabitants. *Newcaſtle* is a pleaſant village: at a decent inn here, a dog is employed as turnſpit; great care is taken that this animal does not obſerve the cook approach the larder; if he does, he immediately hides himſelf for the remainder of the day, and the gueſt muſt be contented with more humble fare than intended.



intended. The neighbouring peaſantry live chiefly upon a coarſe kind of black bread, very diſagreeable in taſte and appearance.

Unleſs there is a certainty of reaching *Carmarthen* before ſun ſet, I would, by all means, recommend this village as night quarters: the difficulties and dangers we underwent by contrary conduct, were too unpleaſant to riſque repetition. *Carmarthen* is a very handſome town, and the Ivy Buſh, a large inn, ſeemingly much frequented; it is, however, a ſort of *Hobſon*'s choice. The gaol is a handſome ſtone building, ſeemingly ſituated within the ancient walls of the caſtle. A ſtone bridge croſſes the river Tovy; which is very narrow and inconvenient here. People are ſeen on the banks of the river, launching their corricles, which they carry, as Indians do their canoes, on their backs, from place to place. This kind of boat is made of light wood,

covered with a horſe's hide; and each contains juſt one fiſherman, who, with a paddle, guides the vehicle with wonderful dexterity through the moſt rapid paſſes. They uſe theſe in the ſalmon fiſhery, which is abundantly productive: a ſalmon may be had for twopence per pound; what is not diſpoſed of freſh at market, is ſalted and dried, and is to be found at the London ſhops, as Welſh ſalmon. The people are very indolent; even on market days, ſcarce a ſingle article is expoſed to ſale, or a ſhop open, before nine or ten in the morning.

In our road from here to *Swanſea*, 27 miles, our carriage occaſioned much inconvenience to the Welſh peaſantry, whom we met in hordes riding to market. None of their ponies would paſs us; and their unexpected whirligig propenſity occaſioned ſeveral nymphs to loſe the center of gravity, and ſome ſwains to become Welſh *Johnny Gilpins*.

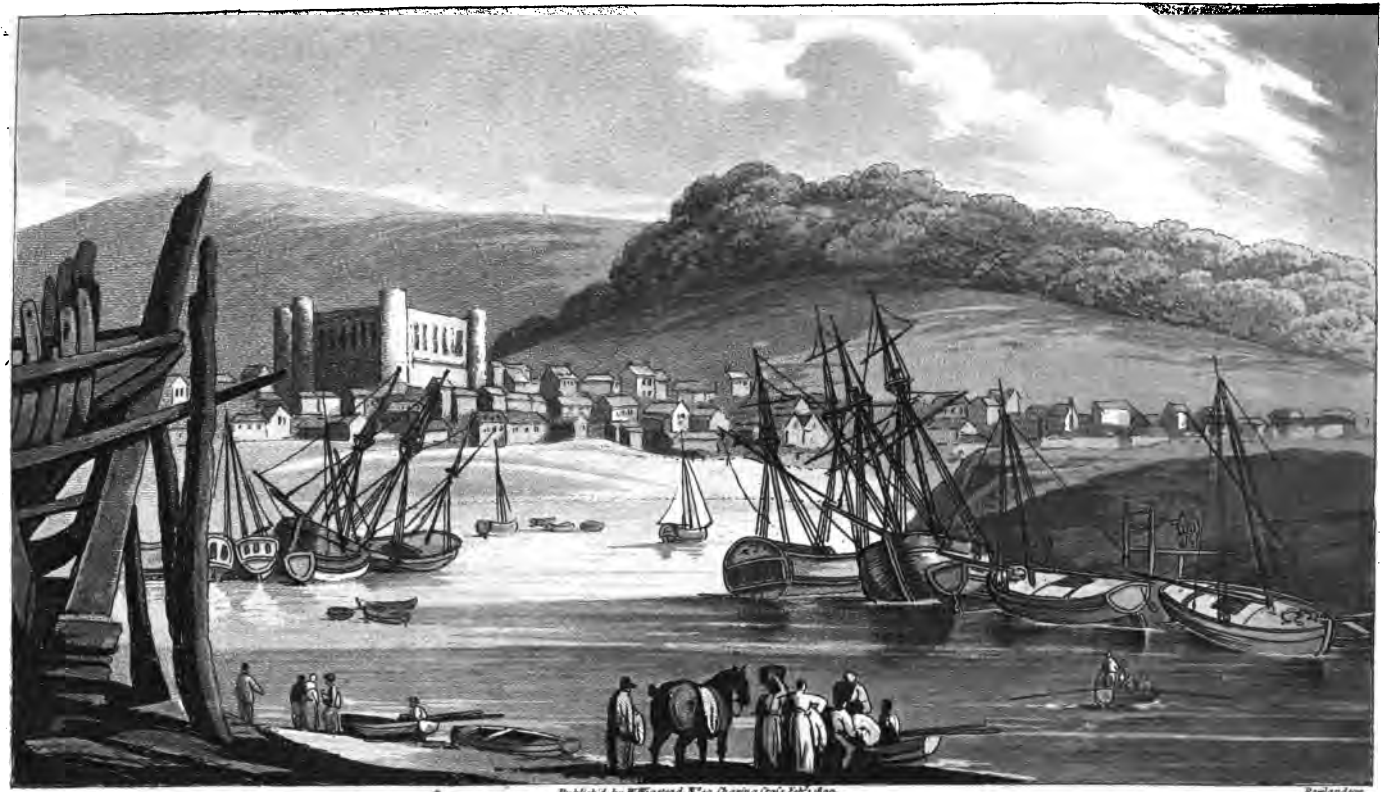
At

At *Llannon*, much dirt and little proviſion is to be had: The cook on our arrival here was in the ſuds, and, with unwiped hands, reached down a fragment of mutton for our repaſt: a piece of ham was loſt, but after long ſearch found amongſt the worſted ſtockings and ſheets on the board: A little child was ſprawling in a dripping pan, which ſeemed recently taken from the fire: the fat in this was deſtined to fry our eggs in. Hunger itſelf even was blunted, and we haſtened to *Swanſea*, leaving our delicacies nearly untouched. I devoted my attention to a brown loaf, but on cutting into it, was ſurpriſed to find a ball of carrotty coloured wool; and to what animal it had belonged, I was at a loſs to determine. Our table cloth had ſerved the family for at leaſt a month, and our ſitting-room was every where decorated with the elegant relics

of a laſt night's ſmoking ſociety, as yet unremoved.

Swanſea is a very large town. (The *Mackworth* arms is the moſt frequented caravanſera.) It is built at nearly the mouth of the *Tovy*: Its chief trade is in coals, pottery, and copper. It has a theatre and library, and alſo bathing machines. In the vicinity are many pleaſant rides; that to *Mumble* caſtle and bay, over the hard ſand at low water, is remarkably delightful. The ruins of the caſtle are very pictureſque: This was a favourite retreat of *Oliver Cromwell.* There is a good houſe of entertainment here, where excellent mutton, and large oyſters may generally be had. After paſſing a very rugged road, *Caſwell* bay opens, where is the fineſt ſandy beach I ever ſaw. It is frequently viſited by the neigbouring nymphs and their ſtrephons; and here, favoured by the moon's cool gleam, they

trip



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SWANSEY.

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trip it on the light fantaſtic toe to the ſhrill pipe and ſpirit-ſtirring tabor; while the gentle gliding wave murmurs in mournful accompaniment.

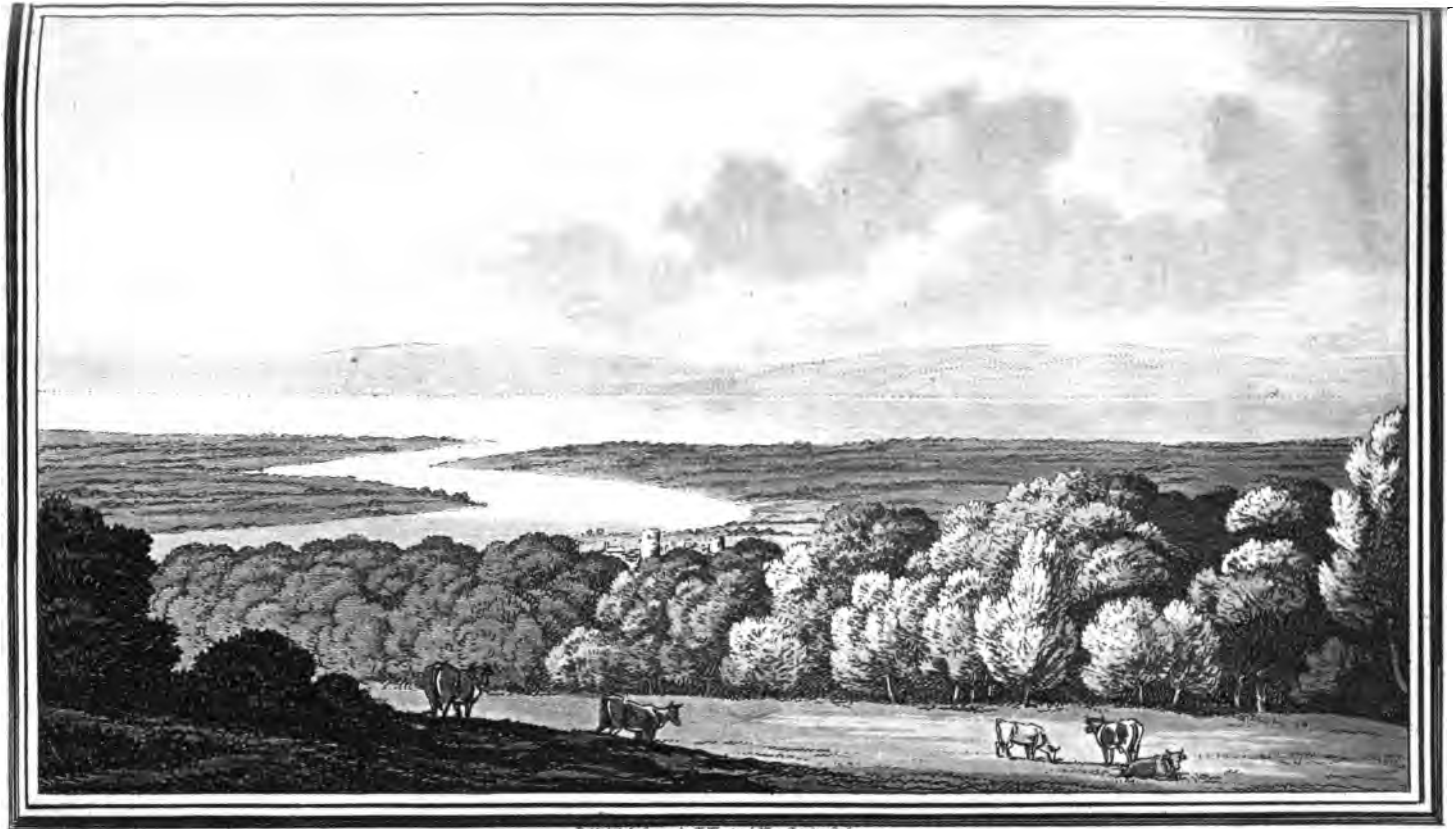
From *Swanſea* to *Neath* is nine miles. *Breton* ferry in the road is a pleaſant ſpot. A little before we entered *Neath*, the abbey attracted our notice; as well on account of the very great extent of ground it muſt have covered, as for ſome picturesque parts of its ruins. Its mutilated apartments afford at preſent miſerable ſhelter to the wives and children of the miners, employed near it. The remains of the exterior of the church prove it to have been moſt magnificent, and of vaſt dimenſions: the great hall is very perfect. The appearance of the miners on the road to this place, (eſpecially at their dinner hour, when they are ſeen in great numbers, carrying their implements) led us to conceive them inhabitants of the infernal regions; which was not a little heightened

heightened by a back ground of fire and ſmoke. There is a very comfortable inn at *Neath*, and I can ſafely ſay, this was the firſt time in *Wales* I could uſe that epithet with ſtrict propriety. The town is irregular but extenſive: The caſtle is in a very ruinous ſtate, and at preſent appropriated to confine hogs to fatten in.

From hence to *Pyle* is 12 miles, paſſing through *Aberavon*. At *Pyle*, is a moſt excellent inn, furniſhed with every accommodation, even to luxury. Margam or Margham Abbey, is about four miles from hence, ſomewhat in a retrograde direction. This, and the village, are ſo ſequeſtered, that unleſs you are well directed from the inn, it is difficult to find them: we found it ſo, even from peaſants within a quarter of a mile of the place. There is a very ancient croſs here in the ſtreet, which reſts againſt a public-houſe. The abbey, from the care of *Mr. Talbot*, (its taſteful proprietor,)

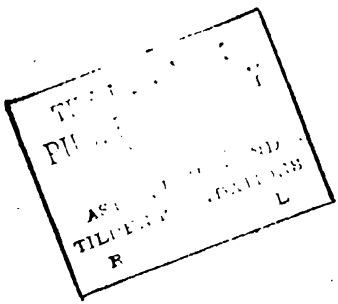
prietor,) is in a very perfect ſtate: the altar, the receptacle for the lamp, and many of the ſculptures on the grave ſtones in the body of the church, are in good preſervation. The Orangerie here is compoſed of about a hundred of the largeſt trees in the three kingdoms, they are generally laden with fruit; and are placed on a lawn in due ſeaſon, and removed into a receptacle, perhaps the moſt extenſive in dimenſions of any ſuch extant. The elevation is ſaid to be taken correctly from a Grecian edifice; the length is 337 feet, exceeding the celebrated ſtable building at *Chantilly*: we were aſtoniſhed to find here ſome of the fineſt antiques ever imported; our eyes, after having been feaſting on nature's ſweets, were now gratified with the eſſence of ancient art, where we did not expect it; it was like diſcovering a *Palmyra* or a *Perſepolis* in a deſart. There are, amongſt many other ſeemingly more than mortal efforts of the chiſſel---a whole length Hercules;

Hercules; a prieſteſs in drapery; an infant Bacchus; the buſt of a fawn; and a moſt beautiful vaſe, embelliſhed with bold relievo, which has been engraved from, by one of our firſt artiſts. *Cardiff* is from *Pyle*, 24 miles, paſſing through *Cowbridge*, which is a market town: the *Cardiff* arms is the moſt public receptacle for travellers. On this road, a moſt beautiful and extenſive proſpect ſuddenly burſts forth. The whole of the vale of *Glarmorgan*, with the *Somerſetſhire* and *Glouceſterſhire* ſhore, terminating the diſtance on the other ſide the Severn, and a circular expanſe of at leaſt 100 miles, in which innumerable villages, and their whited ſpires are ſeen peeping through their woody viſtas, and meandring rivulets in all directions, gliding through every part of the landſcape, affords ample food for attention and contemplation. *Cardiff* is a populous town; its ſituation is flat, on the verge of the river *Taafe*, about



Published Sept. 1799, by W. Wharton, No 40, Charing Cross.

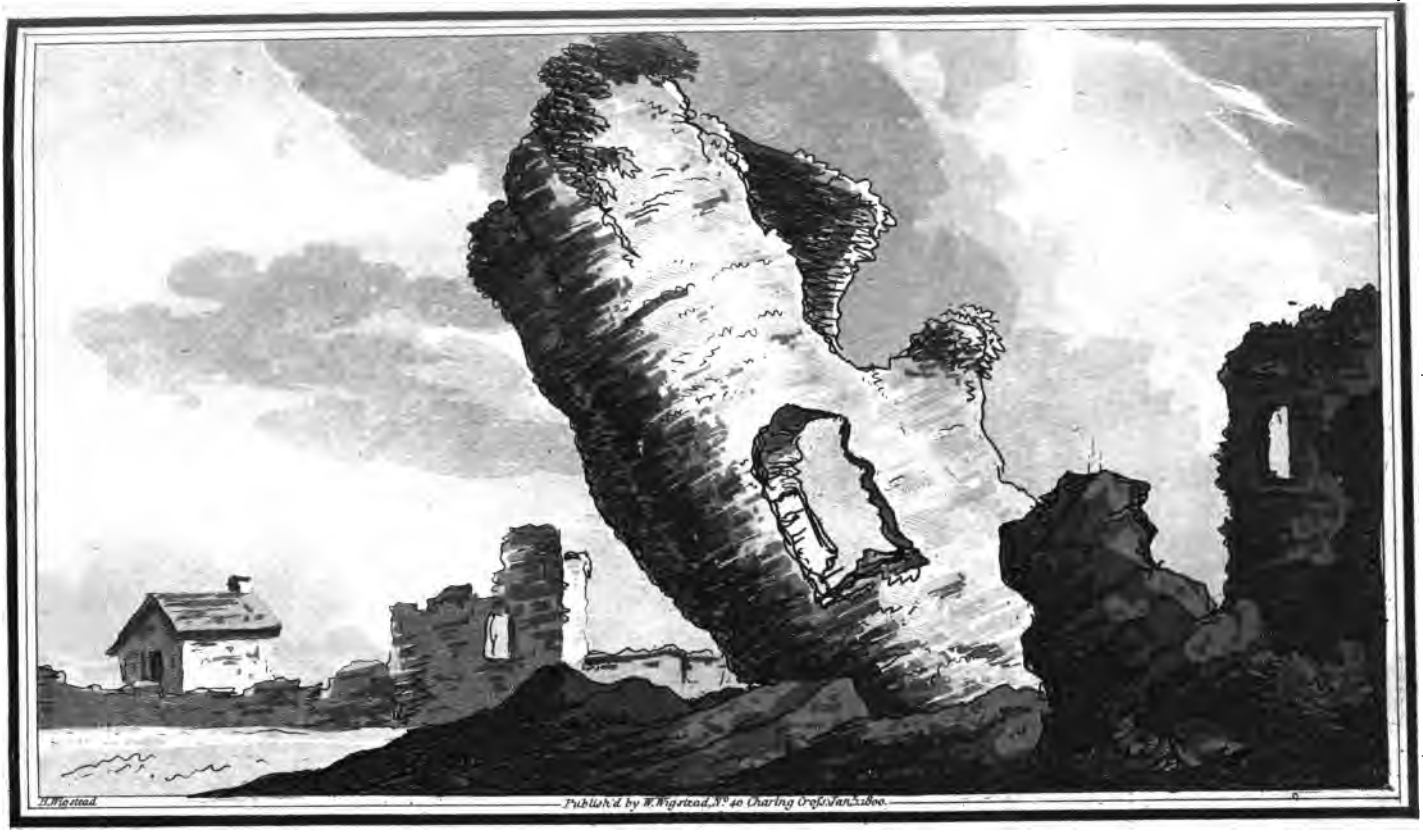
The UNION of the WYE with the SEVERN
from Chepstow.



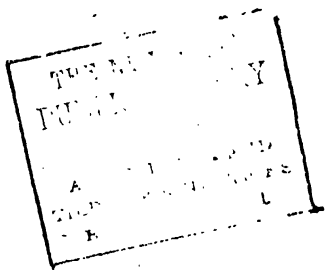
about two miles from its mouth in the *Briſtol* channel. The old walls of *Cardiff* are very extenſive; they are ſuppoſed to have been built by the firſt Norman invaders. *Cardiff* Caſtle is remarkable for having been the place where *Robert* the Elder, ſon of *William* the Conqueror, and the right heir of his father to both *England* and *Normandy*, was confined by *Henry* the Firſt. Here he languiſhed, deprived of his ſight for 26 years, when his brother's cruelties ceaſed only with his death. The apartments in this caſtle have been modernized and furniſhed. The keep, and part of the old walls, convey ſome imperfect idea of their original ſtate. A very fine gravel walk is raiſed all round the walls, which is the public promenade. The tower of the church is much admired for its Gothic beauty, lightneſs, and richneſs.

Caerphilly Caſtle, about eight miles from hence, is by much the moſt noble and extenſive

extenſive ruin in either North or South *Wales*. The road to it is full as bad as that already deſcribed from *Caernarvon* to *Feſtiniog*: it is literally a ſtair-caſe of rude rock, up and down alternately. Here again appears a beautiful extent of *Glamorgan* Vale. The village of *Caerphilly* is ſeated in a deep hollow, ſurrounded by fertilized mountains, The caſtle is ſituated in the midſt of it, and riſes an auguſt monument of antiquity. There is a plan ſhewn by an old man here: the perſon who drew which, ſuppoſes the moſt ancient part to have been built 400 years before Chriſt; and that the hanging tower, which is eleven feet and ſix inches out of the upright, was rent ſo at the Crucifixion. The meaſured circumference of the walls, we were told, exceeded two miles and a half; many of them, if ſo, muſt now be buried in bogs, &c. to render this plauſible. The moſt modern part of this caſtle is computed,



THE HANGING TOWER AT CAERPHILLY.



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CAERPHILLY CASTLE.

puted, by the beſt antiquarians, to have been built in 1221; the ancient part having been nearly deſtroyed in 1217. Spencer held this caſtle for King Edward the Second, and was beſieged in it by the Queen's and Barons forces in 1327. As this place is not in the direct route, it is neceſſary to return to *Cardiff*; from whence to *Newport* is 12 miles. On the road to which is ſeen the *Briſtol* Channel and the Severn: on the other ſides in diſtant aërial hue, appear the coaſts and ſhores of *Cornwall*, *Devon*, *Somerſet*, and *Glouceſter*. *Newport* is a large, miſerable, dirty town, approachable by a ſteep deſcent. The inn here is built cloſe to the gaol. The old houſes here are ſaid to have been erected with the ruins of the ancient City of *Caerleon*, of Roman celebrity. The bridge at *Newport* is compoſed of looſe planks, which, in paſſing, have a very unſafe appearance. The river *Uſke* frequently riſes with ſuch rapidity, as to clear away in its courſe,

courſe, every material that reſiſts its fury. The inhabitants have often experienced its woful effects; but now the looſe planks riſe, float, and fall with the tide. From here to *Chepſtow* is 16 miles. At two miles on the left hand is *Caerleon*. Ruins of Roman temples, baths, aqueducts, and a theatre, are ſtill traceable. *Camden* has preſerved a liſt of Roman antiquities, found here; and daily proofs of its ancient celebrity are diſcoverable.

The entrance (on this road) to *Chepſtow*, is by no means deſerving notice; on the contrary, we began to think we had miſtaken the ſituation, the vicinity of which has been ſo frequently the haunt of genius. The *Beaufort* Arms is ſituated about as pleaſantly as a houſe of entertainment in *Hedge Lane*. In a few paces, however, down the ſtreet, the banks of the Wye attracted our attention, and ſeemed to promiſe much. The caſtle here is a prominent bold

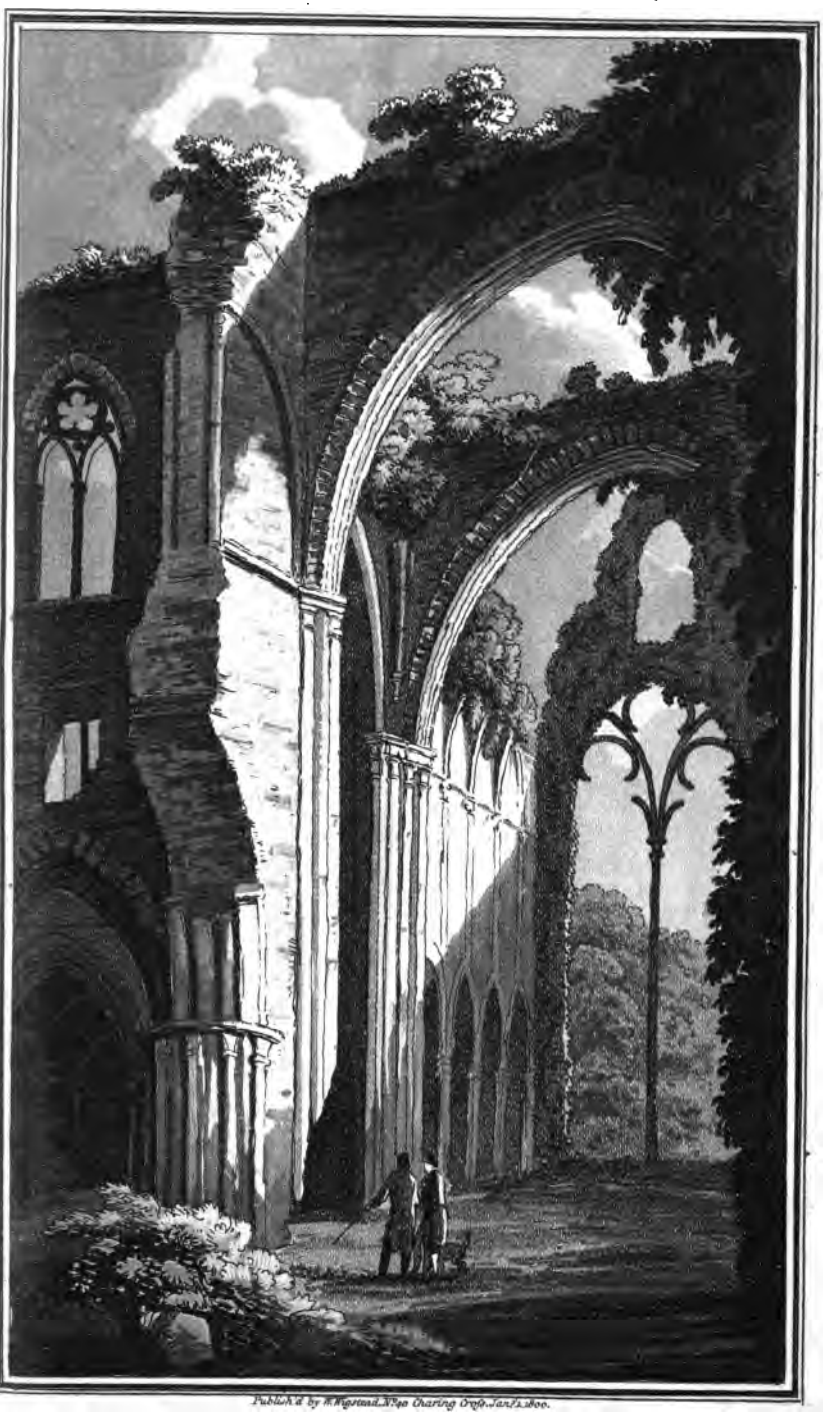
feature

feature in the fore ground; it is ſaid to have been repaired in the thirteenth century by Richard, Earl of *Pembroke*. The bridge is built on the ſame principle, as that at *Newport*. The flooring from the ſurface of the *Wye*, at low water, muſt be at leaſt 80 feet. Nature here forms a coloſſeum of rock and wood. The interior of the caſtle is well worth viſiting; many of the carved mouldings are in a perfect ſtate, and beautifully light. The walls of the chapel are of an immenſe height.

At *Piercefield*, in this neighbourhood, nature has done every thing. I ſhall ſay very little about its beauties, they having been ſo amply detailed by many prior viſitors. I know not who the poſſeſſor then was, but I earneſtly hope, we ſhall not in a few years, ſee little Chineſe temples, flaming dragons, and ſea horſes, peeping through the viſtas, (now ſo beautifully en-

groſſed by nature in her unattired loveli-neſs) ſuch decorations ſerve only to diſ-tract the eye, and raiſe the pitying ſigh in the breaſt of true taſte. *Tintern* abbey is the next object, which deſerves every attention. The horſe road from *Chepſtow* is very bad, and cannot be paſſed without four horſes. There is a very pleaſant water-carriage, where parties can be ac-commodated. *Tintern* abbey has likewiſe been a ſubject for much admiration, in-quiry, and remark. Its venerable remains were certainly to be ranked, as poſſeſſing more ſymmetry and lightneſs, than any we yet witneſſed. It is a moſt beautiful and very perfect ſpecimen of Gothic architec-ture. It was founded in the year 1131, and dedicated to God and St. Mary of *Tintern*, by *Walter Fitz-Richard de Clare*, Lord of *Caerwent* and *Monmouth*. *William*, Earl of *Pembroke*, ſurnamed *Strongbow*, married the daughter of this *Richard*, and

gave



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gave divers lands and privileges to the monks, who were of the *Ciſtercian* order. About 40 years ago his bones were diſcovered: They were laid again in the grave; and his effigy in ſtone, which covered them, is now in a very mutilated ſtate, reſting againſt one of the pillars. The figure of the *Virgin*, with the infant in her arms, is ſtill traceable: probably the ſhrine, at which the monks paid their adoration. From hence the road to *Monmouth* is romantic, and lies through a village, called *Tullock*. *Monmouth* appears delightfully approachable. It is ſituated in a vale of great extent; the town is dirty, and the buildings irregular: very trifling veſtiges of the caſtle are to be ſeen. *Henry* VII. of *Monmouth*, was born here Auguſt 9. 1387. The ſtatue of this prince ſtands at the town-hall. *Ragland* caſtle, a little diſtance from hence, has indiſputable claim on the traveller's attention.

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